

Point of View: Third Person

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

- Identify third-person limited and third-person omniscient point of view
- Analyze the effects of third-person point of view on a piece of literature

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

You will need photocopies for students of:

- **Student Lesson Summary**, p. 94
- **Practice Worksheets**, Levels A and B, pp. 95–97
- **Reteaching Worksheet**, p. 98

You will also need:

- **Transparency: Teaching Model**, “Sleeping Beauty”

Teach

1. **Third-Person Point of View:** Distribute the **Lesson Summary** and preview the **Academic Vocabulary**. Ask students to imagine that a cat has been trapped in a tree. The fire department has come to its rescue. Afterwards, the fire fighter describes the rescue. The woman who owns the cats describes the rescue in a different way. And, finally, a passerby describes it in yet a third way. Each person describes the accident from his or her **point of view**. Explain that descriptions of fictional events can also be told from many different perspectives, or **points of view**.
2. **Teaching Third-Person Point of View:** Use the **Lesson Summary** to review the three steps in identifying third-person point of view.
 - **Narrator and Point of View:** Explain that **point of view** refers to how a writer chooses to narrate a story. The **narrator** is the teller of the story. Review the most commonly-used points of view: **first person**—takes part in the story and uses the pronouns *I*, *me*, and *we*; **third person**—an outside observer, who does **not** take part in the story; uses the pronouns *he* and *she*. Ask students what the point of view is in the Example on the **Lesson Summary**. (*third person; use of he*)
 - **Omniscient and Limited:** Review these terms with students. Point out that *omniscient* comes from two Latin words that mean “all knowing.” An **omniscient** third-person narrator can tell the reader about **all** the characters in a story—both their inner feelings and outward actions. On the other hand, a **limited** third-person narrator is limited to knowing the inner life of just one character but can still describe the words and actions of others. Ask students whether the narrator in the Example on the **Lesson Summary** is omniscient or limited. (*omniscient*) How can you tell? (*The narrator knows the thoughts both of Jeremy and his mother.*)
 - **Analyze:** Tell students that it’s important to know from what point of view a story is told, because this influences what information is included in the story. For example, when a story is told by an omniscient third-person narrator, the reader knows what most people in the story are thinking and feeling, even though the narrator is not a character in the story. When third person is limited, the reader only knows the thoughts and feelings of one character.

POINT OF VIEW: THIRD PERSON, CONTINUED

3. Guided Practice. Display the **Teaching Model Transparency**, “Sleeping Beauty.” Tell students that the transparency contains three versions of the same story, each told by a narrator with a different point of view. Ask volunteers to read each version aloud. Then have the class identify and analyze the point of view of *each* version by asking the following items:

1. Who is telling the story in each version? Does the narrator participate in the action of the story (first-person), or is the person an outside observer (third-person)?
2. Does the narrator know the thoughts and feelings of all characters (omniscient)? Or only one character (limited)? If limited, from which character’s perspective is the story being told?
3. How does the narrator’s perspective affect the way the reader interprets the events and characters?

(Samples:

Version 1—1. The prince; participates in the story; first person. 2. Limited perspective; story told from prince’s points of view. 3. Reader identifies with prince because reader only knows what the prince is thinking.

Version 2—1. Third-person; outside observer; narrator does not participate in story. 2. Omniscient. 3. Reader knows what everyone is thinking and feeling; readers feel close to each character.

Version 3—1. Third person; outside observer; narrator does not participate in story. 2. Limited; told from Sleeping Beauty’s perspective. 3. Readers feel closer to Sleeping Beauty because reader knows only her thoughts and feelings.)

QUICK CHECK. Ask a volunteer to explain the difference between a first-person and a third-person narrator. (*The first-person narrator is a character in the story who uses pronouns such as I, me, and we. The third-person narrative voice comes from outside the story and uses pronouns, such as he and she.*)

Practice and Apply

Practice activities on third-person point of view appear on pp. 95–97.

- Assign **Practice Worksheet A** to students who need more structured activities.
- Assign **Practice Worksheet B** to grade-level and above-level students.

Answer Key: Practice Worksheet A

1. *b*
2. *a*
3. *a*
4. *b*
5. *b*
6. *a*
7. *b*
8. *b*

POINT OF VIEW: THIRD PERSON, CONTINUED

9. *I sucked the milkshake up the straw as obnoxiously as I could.*
10. *In 1990, her family moved to California. She hated leaving all her friends, but she loved California.*

Answer Key: Practice Worksheet B

1. *c* 2. *c* 3. *a* 4. *c* 5. *c* 6. *a* 7. *Sample: Depending on the point of view, the reader ends up with very different impressions of the characters and events. The prince is finding the woman of his dreams, but the princess is waking up to a bad dream.*

Assess and Reteach

Use these guidelines to determine if students need the **Reteaching Worksheet**.

- **Practice Worksheet A:** Students should be able to correctly answer all items.
- **Practice Worksheet B:** Students should be able to answer items 1–6 and provide a reasonable answer to item 7.

For students who need reteaching, review the **Student Lesson Summary**. Focus on the definitions in **Academic Vocabulary** and then work through the **Here's How** steps using the third-person omniscient example on the **Summary**. Then have students complete the **Reteaching Worksheet**, p. 98.

Answer Key: Reteaching Worksheet

1. *third-person*
2. *first-person*
3. *first-person*
4. *He got on the bus and asked the driver for a transfer.*
5. *I came out of the kitchen with a big tray of warm cookies.*
6. *I hesitated, looking up the alley fearfully.*
7. *Sample: I am usually the first person in my family to get up in the morning.*
8. *Sample: He is usually the first person in his family to get up in the morning.*